

LUI Che Woo Prize – Prize for World Civilisation Prize Presentation Ceremony cum Gala Dinner 2019

3 October 2019 (Thursday) at 7pm
Grand Hall, Level 3,
Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre

Mrs Carrie Lam Cheng Yuet-ngor, Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region; the Honourable Mr Tung Chee-hwa, Vice Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference; Professor TAN Tieniu, Vice Minister of the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region; Mr Xie Feng, Commissioner of the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region; Mr Huang Lanfa, Vice Chairman of Committee for Liaison with Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan and Overseas of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference; and distinguished guests, good evening!

Firstly, I would like to thank you all for coming to the Prize Presentation Ceremony of the LUI Che Woo Prize – Prize for World Civilisation, and express my heartfelt gratitude to the many long-time supporters of the Prize who have made time to attend tonight's event. I would also like to thank our dedicated Board of Governors and all members of the Prize's three-tier structure for facilitating the fair selection of the laureates. Last but not least, a big thank you to this year's laureates for coming from afar to accept the awards in person. Please welcome them with the warmest applause!

Since the beginning of time, mother nature has nourished all things that live and given us all of our valuable resources. However, the abundant resources and advanced technology we have nowadays are still not enough to satisfy human desires. Conflicts frequently arise and damage is done to the natural environment.

A few years ago, my lifelong friends and I founded the LUI Che Woo Prize – Prize for World Civilisation based on our shared belief in "lasting serenity and shared harmony". I hope everyone can pursue inner peace by becoming more loving and understanding regardless of race, and together cherish what the world has to offer. Knowing that the hard-earned achievements of all laureates to promote world civilisation align with my vision for the Prize, I feel nothing but happiness.

Now, let me introduce the extraordinary stories of this year's three laureates.

The water and land resources of the world give life to everything, but they aren't treasured by all people. Fortunately, there are environmentalists, such as the laureate of the 2019 Sustainability Prize – The Nature Conservancy, assuming the responsibility for protecting our land and water. Through scientific research, The Nature Conservancy provides reasons and guidance for conservation work. It takes a non-confrontational approach to work with government departments, local communities, private businesses and other organisations to come up with win-win solutions to tackle environmental challenges such as pollution, climate change, water scarcity and food shortages.

The 2019 Welfare Betterment Prize was awarded to Dr Jennifer A. Doudna. Dr Doudna co-invented a revolutionary genome-editing technology which she then selflessly shared with the academia, allowing scientific researchers to explore the vast applications of this powerful tool. This technology could be used to engineer crops with greater productivity, and has the potential to prevent and treat various genetic and complex diseases such as cancer and AIDS.

The 2019 Positive Energy Prize was awarded to Ms Fan Jinshi, “Daughter of Dunhuang”. Ms Fan left home for a harsh desert environment and contributed most of her life to preserve the 1,600-year-old Mogao Grottoes in Dunhuang, China where Eastern and Western cultures met. She overcame numerous challenges posed by the social, political and economic situation as well as the natural environment. Thanks to her unwavering determination, this precious cultural site can be passed down to our future generations.

There is an ancient Chinese saying, “A person cannot have great aspiration without serenity”. By having a peaceful state of mind and being focused, an ambitious dream becomes achievable. I can fully feel the power of concentration from this year's laureates. They have been working relentlessly in their own areas in order to bring better ways of living for all.

As we look around the world, there are many conflicts between countries and between people. In order to overcome the challenges, we need to be kind-hearted and broad-minded. A Chinese saying goes, “A step forward brings troubles; while a step backwards drives troubles away.” It means that as long as we keep calm, show mutual respect and understanding, we will be able to enjoy a harmonious and joyful life, as well as the beautiful environment and valuable resources in the long run.

We all share the same planet as humans and we should live in harmony regardless of race. The laureates of the LUI Che Woo Prize – Prize for World Civilisation are great role models. They continue to make excellent contributions to the world and inspire people to be kind and peaceful as they promote the development and progression of world civilisation. All these positive attitudes are something that I want to recognise and learn from. The nomination for the LUI Che Woo Prize 2020 has already begun. I hope all of you will continue to pay attention to our work and support us. We look forward to making next year even better; to work together collectively and promote world civilisation.

Thank you.